(12.)

ARTICLES

OF

VISITATION and ENQUIRY

Concerning Matters Eccleſiaſticall, according to the Laws and Canons of the Church of *ENGLAND*,

EXHIBITED

To the Miniſters, Church-Wardens, and Sidemen of every Pariſh within the *Dioceſe* of

Worceſter,

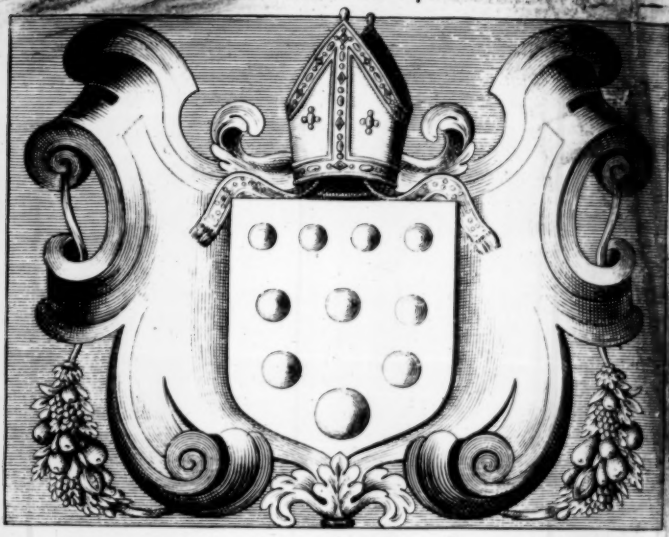
By the Right Reverend Father in God,

JOHN

Lord Biſhop of *WORCESTER*.

LONDON,
Printed by *F. G.* for *Richard Royſton*, Bookſeller to His moſt Sacred Majeſty, 1662.

118 (12)



The Tenor of the Oath to be tendered to the Church-Wardens and Side-men of every Pariſh in the Dioceſe of VVorceſter.

YOu ſhall Swear, after diligent enquiry, to make a true anſwer, according to your knowledge, unto the Articles in this Book now given you in Charge; and to preſent ſuch of your Pariſh as are Offenders therein, contrary to the duty they owe to God and the Laws Eccleſiaſticall: and this you ſhall do, as in the ſight of God, uprightly and truly. *So help you God.*

(12.)

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115 (12)

ARTICLES
Of Visitation and Enquiry, &c.

Titul. I.
Concerning Churches or Chappels, with the Ornaments and Furniture belonging to them.

I. IS your Church-Fabrick (or Chappel) with all things appertaining to it, kept in good repair within and without, with such cleanlinesse, decency and order, as becometh the house dedicated to the Publick Worship and solemn service of God?

II. Hath any part of them, or any thing belonging to them, been sold or embezelled? when? and by whom?

III. Is there in your Church or Chappel an handsome Font of Stone, standing in a convenient place, with a good cover to it, for the Administration of Baptisme? Is there also a decent Communion-Table, with a fair Carpet of Silk or fine Cloth, also a fine linnen covering to be used at the holy Administration of the Lords Supper? What Cup, Chalice, Patin, or Flagons have you belonging to that Service?

IV. Have you in your Church (or Chappel) a convenient Pew for your Minister to read Divine Service in? Also a Pulpit, with a decent Cloth and Cushion? Have you a large

large Folio Bible of the last Translation, with two Books of Common-Prayer well bound, one for the Minister, the other for the Clark? Have you the Book of Homilies set forth by Authority; also the Book of Canons, and a Table of allowed degrees in Marriage?

V. Have you a Register Book of Parchment for all that are Christned, Married, and Buried in your Parish, in which are set down the names of the parties, with the Day, Moneth and Year of each Christning, Marriage, and Burial? Is the transcript of these every year within one moneth after March 25. brought in to the Bishops Registry?

VI. Have you a Paper-Book, in which the names of strangers that Preach or Officiate in your Church or Chappel are set down; and another Book for your Church-wardens accounts.

VII. Have you a fair Surplice and other Ornaments, according to his degree, for your Minister to use in his Publick Administrations, onely for outward decency, order, and distinction?

VIII. Have you a strong Chest, with Locks and Keys, wherein the Plate and other Vessels, with the Books and Vestments belonging to the Church, may be safely and decently kept? Have you a Bier with a black Herse-cloth for the decent interment of the dead?

Tit. II.

Concerning the Church-yard, Houses, Glebes, Tithes or Rents belonging to the Church.

I. IS your Church-yard sufficiently fenced with Walls, Rails, or Pales, and decently kept from all annoyance and encroachment? Are the trees therein preserved?

II. Is the Mansion-house of your Minister, with all other houses thereto belonging, kept in good repair? Have any of them been pulled down or defaced? Hath any encroached upon the Land thereto belonging, or felled the Trees there on growing?

III. Have

III. Have you a perfect Terrier of all Glebe-lands, Gardens, Orchards, and Tenements belonging to your Parsonage or Vicarage? Also a particular List of such Pensions, Tithes, Rents, Customs, and other yearly Profits within or without your Parish, as belong thereto? Are any of them withheld from your Minister? and by whom?

IV. Have any of the ancient Glebe-lands belonging to your Parsonage or Vicarage been taken away, or alienated by Lease, Sale, or Exchange, without License from the Ordinary, and the free consent of the Incumbent? Have any Inclosures been made in your Parish to the detriment of the Church?

Tit. III.

Concerning Ministers.

I. Is your Minister Episcopally Ordained (Deacon or Priest) according to the Laws of the Realm of England, and the ancient practice of the Church universall, no lesse then of this National Church?

II. Is he defamed or suspected to have obtained his Orders or Benefice by any Simoniacal compact?

III. Hath he been legally Instituted and Inducted into his Benefice? Did he within two moneths after his Induction publickly read in the Church, upon some Lords-day or other Holy-day, in the time of Divine Service, the 39. Articles of Religion established in the Church of England? Did he then and there publickly declare his assent thereunto?

IV. Hath your Minister been Licenced to officiate by the Bishop of this Diocese, or either of the two Universities? Doth he being thus Licenced diligently read Divine Service, and Preach every Lords-day, in your Church or Chappel, unlesse hindered by Sickneſſe or reasonable absence? and in such cases doth he procure some lawfull Minister to read Prayers, to Preach, and perform other Ministerial duties?

V. Doth

V. Doth your Minister Preach sound Doctrine onely, both for Faith and Manners, tending to the Edifying of people in the knowledge of God and their Saviour Jesus Christ, according to the holy rule of the Scripture, and the obedience of the Gospel? Do you know that he hath at any time within one years space last past preached any False, Heretical, Seditious, Scandalous or Schismatical Doctrine, thereby to seduce people to Errour or Faction, to the danger of their Souls, and the disturbance of the Peace of this Church and Kingdom?

VI. Doth your Minister in his Prayer before Sermon devoutly and discreetly commend to the grace of God the Church Catholick here on earth, particularly these British Reformed Churches; also the Kings most Excellent Majesty, according to his just and Royal Titles; together with all Estates Ecclesiastical and Civil? Doth he praise God for the faithful, who have overcome this World, and are at rest from their labours? Doth he alwayes conclude with the Lords Prayer? Doth he in his Prayer or Sermon affect any odde or Fanatick expressions, or excessive length?

VII. Doth your Minister in the Morning and Evening Service, and in the Administration of the Holy Sacraments, and in performing of other publick Religious Offices appointed by the Church of England, use the respective Forms in the Book of Common Prayer, together with those Rites and Ceremonies which are enjoyned in this Church, and declared to be not any necessary parts of Divine Worship, but onely things of Decency, Order, and Edification, tending to the Peace and Uniformity of the Church?

VIII. Doth your Minister diligently examine in the Church-Catechisme the Youth of your Parish every Lords-day in the afternoon? Doth he also instruct others that are ignorant in the Fundamental points of Christian Religion? Doth he prepare and, as occasion is offered, present the Youth so instructed to the Bishop, to be Confirmed by the laying on of his hands, with Prayer and Benediction,

in

in that faith they profesſe, according to the Primitive practice of the Church of Christ? Doth he endeavour to reclaim all Popish Recusants, and other Sectaries in your Parish, to the true Religion established in the Church of England?

IX. Is your Minister, whether Parson, Vicar, or Curate, conformable in his Doctrine and Life to the holy Rule and great example of the Lord Jesus Christ? Is he a man of a studious, sober, peaceable, unblameable and exemplary life, for Piety, Sanctity, Charity, and Industry in his calling? Is he Grave, Modest, and Regular in his outward demeanor, for Haire and Clothes, according to the Constitutions and Customes of the Church of England? Is his Company, Carriage and Conversation in Word and Deed such as becometh a Minister of the Gospel, who remembers the great account he must give for his own and other mens Souls committed to his charge?

X. Is he ready to visit the Sick, and to perform those Offices to them which are required in the Church of England; also to Baptise any Infant in danger of Death, when he is desired so to do? Is any Infant or other by his default yet unbaptized in your Parish? Doth he refuse to give the Sacrament to any in your Parish, and for what Cause? or doth he give it to such as are scandalous notorious sinners, or such as are excommunicate, or refuse to be reconciled to their Neighbours?

XI. Doth your Minister Marry any persons in private Houses, or such as are under Age, not having the consent of their Parents or Guardians? Doth he marry any without Bannes first published three Sundayes or Holy-dayes in the Church? Doth he marry at other Houres than betweene eight and twelve in the Forenoone, without having any Licence so to do?

XII. Hath your Minister taken upon him to appoint any publick or private Fasts, Prophecyings, or Religious exercises, without lawfull Authority? Doth he in those that are duly appointed use the Forms prescribed by

Authority? Doth he, or any other Minister or Lay-person, hold any Conventicle or Religious meetings in private houses within your Parish, for people of several Families to resort unto, contrary to the Laws and Canons in that case provided?

XIII. Is your Minister constantly Resident among you? And how many weeks in a year hath he been absent from his Benefice? Hath he any Curate to assist him in his absence or presence? Is that Curate in Holy Orders according to the Church of England? Hath he a Licence from his Bishop to serve the Cure? And doth he carry himself also as an able and discreet Minister, and conformable to the Church of England? What yearly stipend hath he?

XIV. Is there in your Parish beside the Parson, or Vicar and Curate, any that Preacheth onely as a Lecturer? Is he in Holy Orders, and conformable to the Church of England, and Licenced by the Bishop of this Diocese? Doth he read Divine Service before his Lecture, and in all things demean himself as is meet for the Peace of the Church of England and of your Parish?

XV. Doth your Minister give notice of and duly observe Holy-dayes, Festivals, or Fasts, with other solemn times, as Ember and Rogation Weeks, according as is by the Laws and Canons of this Church appointed?

Tit. IV.

Concerning Parishioners.

I. Is there any in your Parish that are reputed Hereticks or Schismaticks, refusing Communion with the Church of England, or professing any other Religion than what is Established in this Church, seducing others from it, and railing against it? Are there any convicted Papists, known Anabaptists, Familists, Quakers, and other Separatists in your Parish?

II. Is

II. Is there any person in your Parish that lyeth under any common fame or vehement suspicion of Adultery, Fornication, or Incest? Are there any common Drunkards, Swearers, or Blasphemers of Gods Name, and his Holy Word? Are any noted for railers, unclean and filthy talkers, or sowers of sedition, or living in discord and contention? Are there any excommunicated by the censures of the Church, and not yet reconciled?

III. Do any of your Parish profane the Lords-day, by neglecting of publick Holy Duties, or by doing the works of their ordinary callings, or by using unlawful Recreations, or permitting their Children and Servants so to do? Do they duly observe other Holy-dayes, Festivals, or Fasts appointed by Authority, for the advancement of piety, charity, and devotion?

IV. Do those that inhabit or sojourn in your Parish duly resort to your Church or Chappel, there to worship God according to the Religion of the Church of England? Do they come thither, and continue there during Divine Service, Sermons, and other Holy Duties, with that reverence, order and decency, befitting humble and devout Christians, as is required by the Laws, Canons, and laudable customs of the Church of England?

V. Are there in your Parish any that refuse to have their Infant Children Baptized by your Minister? or do they keep them unbaptized longer than this Church alloweth? Are there any Infants or more aged persons in your Parish not yet Baptized?

VI. Doth every House-holder in your Parish cause their Children, Apprentices and Servants to learn the Church Catechisme, and give account of it to your Minister, as he shall require it in the Church on Sundayes or other Holy-dayes, as is appointed? And when they are therein well instructed, do they take care to have them brought by the Minister to Confirmation, when occasion is offered, by the Bishop, for the increase of all spiritual gifts and graces in them?

VII. Is there any person in your Parish, who being sixteen

teen years of age, and well instructed in Religion, neglecteth or refuseth to receive the Blessed Sacrament of the Lords Supper at least three times in one year (of which Easter to be one?) Do all receive this Sacred Mystery with that outward gesture of humility, reverence, and lowly adoration, which becomes them to their God and Saviour, meekly kneeling, according to the Order and Custom of the Church of England?

VIII. Are there any of your Parish who do keep familiar Society with them that are excommunicated, so as to countenance them in their sins, or encourage them in their contumacy?

IX. Are there any of your Parish who are known or suspected to be unlawfully married, contrary to the Laws of God and this Church? Are there any who having been lawfully divorced do live together again; or who being lawfully married and not divorced, do yet live asunder?

X. Are there any married Women in your Parish, who after their safe delivery from Child-birth refuse to make their humble and publick thanksgiving to God for so great a mercy, according to the Rites and Appointment of the Church of England?

XI. Are there any of your Parish who refuse to pay their Easter-Offerings and other Duties to your Minister; or to pay the Rates assessed on them for the repaire and provisions of the Church?

XII. Do any among you refuse to bury their dead according to the Forms and Rites of the Church of England, which are so consonant to the faith, hope, and charity of true Christians, towards those that dye in the peace of the Church? Are there any Wills or Testaments of persons dead in your Parish yet unproved, or any Gods Administred without a legal grant from the Ordinary? Do you know of any Legacies given to your Church, or the poor, or other pious and charitable uses, not yet received by you, or detained from you?

XIII. Do you know or have heard of any in your Parish, who having the presentation of an Ecclesiastical Living,

ving, hath made any Simoniacal compact or gain thereby, either in mony, or by reserve of any part of the Tithes or Glebe belonging to that Benefice?

XIV. Have any Pews or Seats been erected in your Church or Chappel without leave from the Ordinary? Is there any strife or contention about Seats in the Church? Have any occasioned Riot, Clamor, or Fighting in the Church at any time?

Tit. V.

Concerning Parish-Clerks and Sextons belonging to the Church.

I. Have you a Parish-Clerk, who is of a sober life and good report? Is he able for Reading, Writting, and Singing as a Clerk? Is he chosen by your Minister and approved by the Parish? Are his wages duly paid him?

II. Doth he or your Sexton take care of the Church, to keep it lockt and clean, to open the doors, and to ring the Bells in due time, to call the living to the Worship of God; also to admonish them by tolling of a Passing-Bell of any that are dying, thereby to meditate of their own Deaths, and to commend the others weak condition to the mercy of God?

Tit. VI.

Concerning Hospitals and Almes-houses, Schools and School-masters, Physicians, Chirurgeons, and Midwives.

I. What Hospital, Almes-house, or Free-school hath been Founded in your Parish? Are they so ordered in the Revenue and Use as the Founders appointed, and the Law of the Land allows? II. What

II. What School-master private or publick is there in your Parish? Is he (or they) Licenced by the Bishop or his Chancellor? Doth he instruct his Scholars in the Catechisme and Religion of the Church of England, according to that Conformity and Order which is established as necessary for the Publick Peace?

III. Do any in your Parish practise Physick, Chirurgery or Midwifery, without Licence from the Ordinary?

Tit. VII.

Concerning Church-Wardens and Side-men.

I. Are the Church-wardens of your Parish yearly chosen according to Law, and do they appoint Side-men to assist them for the due ordering of the Church?

II. Have the last Church-wardens given up their accounts to those that succeed them, together with all monies and other things belonging to your Church or Chappel?

III. Do your Church-wardens and Side-men diligently take notice of their names, who without a sufficient cause are absent from Divine Service and Sermons on the Lords-dayes and other Holy-dayes? Do they by Warrant from the next Justices levy 12. pence by way of distresse (according to Law) upon their Goods, in case they refuse to pay it, for their wilful and causeless absence? and is the money so levyed distributed to the poor of your Parish, and kept upon account in a Book?

IV. Do you suffer none to stand idle, or to play, or walk, or talk together, or to behave themselves rudely and unseemly within or without the Church during the time of Gods Holy Worship and Service, to the scandal and disturbance of the Minister and Congregation?

V. Do you provide fine White-Bread and good Wine against every Communion, according to the number of Communicants?

VI. Do

VI. Do you cauſe all ſtrangers who preach in your Church to enter their names in a Book, and by what Biſhop they are Licenced to Preach?

VII. Have you taken care to give a true Anſwer unto theſe Articles, and to draw up your preſentments according to your Oaths, conſulting with your Miniſter and other Neighbours?

THis you are ſeriouſly to conſider, That as the *faithful* diſcharge of your *Offices* according to your Oaths and Duties is a ſpecial means to *repreſs*, *puniſh*, and *reform ſins*, *ſcandals*, and *diſorders* in your Pariſh; alſo to preſerve the *honour* of *Religion* and the Peace of this Church, to the glory of our God and Saviour (which are the great Uſes and Ends of all Church-Government and Diſcipline:) So if you neglect your Duties herein, you ſin againſt God, your Conſciences, and the Churches Proſperity, being liable, in caſe of wilful Omiſſion and Perjury, to thoſe Puniſhments which are by the Law to be inflicted on you for your defaults.

The Miniſters of every Pariſh, are deſired to give in the Names of ſuch as having not yet received the Lords Supper, are by them upon examination judged fit for Confirmation, and ſo for the Holy Communion.

THE END.